INSP. DON H. SMITH

DET. M.A. SAMPLE

BLACK ORGANIZING PROJECT;

MAY 21,1969

The following is a report from [redacted] for May 19,1969.

At 7pm at 271 Vance those present were;

JOHN C. SMITH	EDDIE TATE
MELVIN SMITH	CURTIS DAVIS
ARCHIE WILLIAMS	MARY HOLMAN
DANIEL TAYLOR	JAMES PEQUES
JOHNNIE PRIERSON	About 10 to 12 others
M.C. CLARK	7 or 8 teenagers came
CACHEATUH SMITH	to apply for membership

The group was waiting on Willie Wine and Coby Smith so they could start the meeting.

At 8pm Coby Smith called and asked Pigford to come out and get him for the meeting. When Pigford arrived at Coby's home there were two MM/s #1 BILL PONDS, # 2 BILL WILSON. Both of these men are with VISTA (Volunteers In Service to America). VISTA is to set up an office in Memphis but no date was given.

Bill Ponds said "We are going to bring in 18 community organizers, all are volunteers for VISTA." They are expected to train 18 other people from the Memphis community to be organizers within six months after they arrive. However the 18 that are coming will be here for one year. After the 18 have been trained from Memphis, they will be given jobs as community organizers, the salary is $82.50 every other week, or $165 per month plus 6¢ a mile for transportation. Also they put another $50 per month in the bank for you which you can withdraw only at the end of the 12 month period which terminates the job. What we are interested in now is setting up a governing board that will consist of at least 14 people from Memphis at work with 8 other people from VISTA who will serve on the board, 4 of these 8 will be lawyers. We would like for the board members to come from groups or organizations that are already established in Memphis. That is why we wanted to talk with you concerning persons of your choice from the Invaders. We have been told your group is very active in the community organizing. We have talked to Ralph Jackson

MAS/mae

and Jim Lawson already. Jackson told us that VISTA sounded like work to him and he didn't want to be involved too deeply, because he already has too much to do. When we mentioned the Invaders to him, he told us he could not talk to the Invaders anymore and threw up his hands and said the Invaders are trying to do everything to him. Also we are going to talk with L. S. WILE, BILL KOHEART, REV. BILL SMITH, EZEKIEL BELL and MAXINE SMITH and we are going to Washington's house when we leave here tonight".

COBY SMITH said " First off, you were dealing with the wrong people when you went to Jackson and Lawson. They aren't interested in organizing the community, they are interested in politics and money only. The Invaders do not get involved with any group such as COME, where the balance of power is already atacked against you. Before anyone can go around preaching politics he must organize the community first. I don't know who told you we were organizers, but they told you the truth. If Jackson or Lawson gave the names of some people to serve on the board , my suggestion is that you should keep one of those names at the most, because what they are doing is putting people on the board who they can control and influence. Our problem with organizing is that the Police know we are getting people together so they put our people in jail when ever they want to ."

Maloy said " Maybe they will be reluctant to put them in jail if they are working for a Federal agency.

Coby stated " Maybe so, but we have a long jail list. "

Coby submitted Pigford and Watson's names and suggested they get two Welfare mothers to serve on the board.

At 9:45pm Ponds and Maloy left saying they were going to Washington's house.

At 10pm Coby and Pigford went to 271 Vance and left 100 copies of literature, "What's really going on".

The literature reads,"Open Communication Forum, Friday May 23,1969 at 7:30pm at Newman Foundation for all MCLT Trainees, all who have attended the Pine Crest, Paris Landing and Jackson Conference , All members of Black-White dialog groups, and all whom you invite.

(MEMPHIS CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP TRAINING)

Program: 15 minute presentation followed by question periods.

1. MCLT problems and plans , B.O.HEPHART, Dircetor MCLT

2. Memphis State & the BSA - David Acey

3. City employees, the union and the establishment, J.B. TROTTER, MCLT board

4. The Invaders and the Black Knights, selected spokesman

5. N. A. M. E. , a summit program for white suburbanites, Sister Adrain, Pine Crest.

There had been a small meeting at 271 Vance and they were talking about their summer plans to get moreyoung people to join. Eddie Tate and Melvin Smith did the talking during the meeting.

Also there was a meeting at Clayborn Temple last night, May 19,1969, this meeting consisted of the 25 people who were fired at Methodist Hospital. Sometime during the meeting Eddie Tate passed out from some sort of siezure.

[redacted]

[redacted] Coby told about his visit to the Police station. He said when he talked with Marrell and the others he was talking in Marrell's favor and trying to get him a promotion ,"but Marrell came out and said what we are doing at 271 Vance was corrupt and so I just stopped talking to him then and there. What we should do is screen every member we have. We are definately going to do that for everyone coming in in the future. However I am not worried too much about police being in the organization, we have some more in there also according to my source of information. From the information I received Marrell was on loan to the MPD from the CIA. Like I said, I'm not going to worry too much about the Policeman until I find him out. If I should happen to get put in jail the cop who had me sent there had better not be around when I get out."